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C O N F I D E N T I A L YEREVAN 001083

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EUR/CACEN, DRL

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/21/2015

TAGS: PREL PHUM PGOV AM

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S MEETING WITH ARMENIAN OMBUDSMAN

REF: YEREVAN 1036

Classified By: DCM A.F.Godfrey for reasons 1.4 (b,d).

(C) On June 16, Ambassador Evans met with Armenian Ombudsman Larissa Alaverdyan to publicly demonstrate USG support for the embattled office of the GOAM human rights defender. As part of the visit, Ambassador Evans gave Alaverdyan's office a computer (a unit made obsolete by a recent Consular upgrade) to replace the one confiscated by the National Security Service (NSS) during a raid on her office (reftel). Alaverdyan repeated claims that a heavy-handed NSS investigation into her activities is evidence of a government "campaign" designed to discredit her office and undercut her criticism of the Administration's human rights record. Alaverdyan said she would keep us informed of any developments in the case or attempts by GOAM officials to undermine her authority as the nation's top human rights representative.

EVANS